

REMARKS

Applicants note with appreciation that, in the Office Action of September 9, 2008, claims 12, 13 and 22-24 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, claims 1-3, 7-9, 26 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,801,777 (“Lyu”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,224,890 (“Kato”). In addition, claims 4-6 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lyu and Kato in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,329,319 (“Sgrignoli”). Furthermore, claims 10-11, 14-21 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lyu and Kato in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,818,419 (“Tajima et al.”).

In response, Applicants have rewritten the “objected to” claim 12 in independent form by amending the independent claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 12. However, the limitations of the intervening claims 10 and 11 were not added to the independent claim 1 since these limitations do not appear to affect the patentability of the amended independent claim 1. As a result, claim 12 has been canceled and claims 10 and 13 have been amended to maintain proper claim dependency or to maintain proper antecedent basis. The independent claims 26 and 28 have been similarly amended.

As amended, Applicants respectfully submit that the independent claims 1, 26 and 28, as well as their dependent claims 2-11, 13-25, 27, 29 and 30, are now in condition for allowance. Thus, a notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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